

Example Five-Paragraph Essay (on the advantages of five-paragraph model)

I love using the five-paragraph model for writing. I can find three points to argue for or exemplify just about any topic imaginable. Cats are good pets because they're good companions, they're clean, and they're easy to care for. *Jaws* is a classic film because of its acting, its cinematography, and its musical score. Three examples of the U.S. government's checks and balances are its executive branch, its legislative branch, and its judicial branches. The five-paragraph model is a valuable tool for many writing situations because it structures my writing, it aids my readers, and it is versatile.

One advantage of the five-paragraph model is that it structures what I write. Before I learned the five-paragraph recipe, I'd either stare at a blank screen or I'd write one big block of text; now, I know to first identify three examples, reasons, or other supporting pieces of evidence. Then, I develop those three examples, reasons, or pieces of evidence into its own paragraph. I write a thesis statement based off those three examples, reasons, or pieces of evidence; I flesh out my introduction with a hook; and I write a conclusion paragraph. Following the five-paragraph model makes my writing tasks considerably less intimidating.

A related advantage of the five-paragraph model is that my following the recipe makes it easy for readers to follow my writing. When readers see five paragraphs (not one block of text), they can anticipate that I'll introduce my topic in my first paragraph and that I'll conclude my first paragraph with my thesis statement. Readers can predict that I'll provide three examples, reasons, or other supporting evidence to support my thesis statement, each of which will be fleshed out in its own paragraph: boom, boom, boom. And readers know they'll find my conclusions in my final, fifth paragraph. By using the five-paragraph model, I ease the burden on my readers.

A third advantage of the five-paragraph model is that, like most recipes, it can be doubled or even tripled. For a standard 400 to 500-word paper, I apply the standard single batch of the recipe, writing 75 to 100 words in each of the five paragraphs. For a 1000-word essay, I double the recipe writing by two paragraphs, rather than only one, for the introduction, the three supporting paragraphs, and the conclusion paragraph. I can even write a 5000-word paper with this recipe (by writing 1000 words for each of the five components). The five-paragraph model is versatile for all my writing needs.

It's obvious. I'm clearly a fan of the five-paragraph model. As long as I'm able to outline three reasons why Psychology is my favorite subject, three arguments why *Pulp Fiction* is better than *Forrest Gump*, and three examples of how Shakespeare's works are relevant to current day society, I can write just about any analytical essay. The five-paragraph model is truly a valuable tool. I wished my life was as well structured, versatile, and easy to follow as the five-paragraph model.

Based off of an essay by Dr. Robert T. Koch Jr., UNA University Writing Center; August 27, 2007
(<https://www.una.edu/writingcenter/docs/Writing-Resources/Organization5Paragraph.pdf>)

Example Five-Paragraph Essay (about Going to Movies)

I am a movie fanatic. When friends want to know what picture won the Oscar in 2001, they ask me. When friends want to know who voiced Optimus Prime in *Transformers*, they ask me. However, my buddies have stopped asking me if I want to go out to the movies. While I love movies as much as ever, I find it more enjoyable to wait for a movie's release on Netflix because of the inconvenience of going out, the temptations of the concession stand, and the behavior of some patrons.

First of all, just getting to the theater presents difficulties. Leaving a home equipped with an HDTV and surround sound isn't attractive on a cold or rainy night. Even if the weather cooperates, there is the hassle of looking for a parking space and the lines. There is also the worry of whether you and your friends will get all your seats together. Although none of these hindrances are insurmountable, it's much easier to stay seated on your sofa.

Second, the theater offers tempting snacks that I don't really need. At home I can control myself because there is no ice cream in the freezer, we don't have sodas in the fridge, and my snacks tend to be healthy, like fruits, nuts, and juices. At the movies, even if I only buy a Diet Coke, the smell of fresh popcorn dripping with butter soon overcomes me. And what about the nachos with cheese and the Snickers and M&M's? I'm better off without all those temptations.

Finally, some of the other patrons are even more of a problem than the concession stand. Little kids race up and down the aisles, making noise. Teenagers try to impress their friends by talking back to the actors on the screen or otherwise making fools of themselves. Some adults aren't any better, commenting loud enough to reveal plot twists that are supposed to be a secret until the movie's end. What am I doing here, I ask myself.

After arriving home from the movies one night, I decided I had had enough. I was not going to be a moviegoer anymore. I was tired of the problems involved in getting to the theater, resisting unhealthy snacks, and dealing with the patrons. The next day, I arranged to have premium movie channels added to my cable TV service, and I got a Netflix membership. I may now see movies a bit later than other people, but I'll be more relaxed watching box office hits in the comfort of my own living room.

Modified from John Langan (<https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1JCvHCo6icEPJ6dEdVrtuWBM0r13Pr9KgMetaBpS-joY/>)

Example Five-Paragraph Essay (about Cats)

Man's best friend has historically been considered a dog. But dogs are not the only animal friend whose camaraderie people enjoy. For many people, a cat is their best friend. Despite what dog lovers may believe, cats make excellent house pets because they are good companions, they are civilized members of the household, and they are easy to care for. Let me tell you why.

Cats are good companions. They will snuggle up and ask to be petted or scratched under the chin, and who can resist a purring cat? If they're not feeling affectionate, cats are generally quite playful; they love to chase balls and feathers — or just about anything dangling from a string. And when they're tired from chasing laser pointers, cats will curl up in your lap to nap. Cats are loyal housemates.

Cats are also civilized housemates. Unlike dogs, cats don't bark or make other loud noises; most cats don't even meow that often. Cats don't usually have accidents; mother cats train their kittens to use the litter box, and most cats will use it without fail from that time on. Cats do have claws, but a tall scratching post in a favorite cat area of the house will often keep the cat content to leave the furniture alone. Compared with other pets, cats are actually quite polite.

Cats are easy to care for. They don't have to be walked because they get plenty of exercise in the house as they play. Even cleaning their litter box can be a quick, painless procedure. Cats also take care of their own grooming; bathing a cat is almost never necessary because under ordinary circumstances cats clean themselves. Cats are so easy to care for they can be left home alone for a few hours without fear.

Cats are low maintenance, civilized companions. People who have small living quarters appreciate having a cat. People who have less time for pet care appreciate having a cat. However, even people who have plenty of space and time still opt to have a cat because they love the cat personality. In many ways, cats are an ideal house pet.

Modified from Kathy Livingston (<http://klivingston.tripod.com/essay/sample.html>)

Example Five-Paragraph Essay (about Exercise)

Everywhere people turn -- websites, magazines, and infomercials -- advice for improving health bombards them. Much of this advice is commercially motivated by those eager to sell questionable supplements and diet gimmicks. However, some of it, especially that advocating a regular exercise program, merits serious attention. Such a program, if it consists of at least thirty minutes three times a week and if a person's physician approves it, provides numerous benefits. Regular exercise releases tension, improves muscle tone, and increases stamina.

One of exercise's most immediate benefits is the release of tension. Tension builds in the body because of an over-accumulation of adrenaline produced by stress, anxiety, or fear. Doctors agree that exercising for thirty minutes releases tension. After tension is released, petty irritations and frustrations should be less troubling. Planned physical exercise, therefore, can reduce, or at least control, stress.

Improved muscle tone is a second benefit of regular exercise. Although not as immediately apparent as a better disposition, improvement does come. About a month after starting a regular exercise program, increased strength can be observed not only in one's muscles but also in one's posture. Continued exercise will continue to increase strength. In fact, the increase in muscle tone from regular exercise is a cumulative benefit.

In addition to lowered stress and increased physical strength, exercise produces stamina. A stronger, less stressed body is more capable of withstanding normal fatigue than a tense, weak one. A worker who exercises regularly should be able to complete a forty-hour week and still retain enough energy for non-work activities. Similarly, a student who exercises regularly is in better shape, literally and figuratively, for pushing through during the busiest time of the semester. Improved endurance is one of the most important benefits of a regular exercise program.

Easy solutions to the goals of fitness saturate the media. However, acquiring the benefits of fitness is not easy. Nonetheless, the rewards are fully worth the effort of an established exercise program. Regular physical activity can make a person feel more relaxed, stronger, and have greater stamina for unusual as well as routine activities. Regular exercise helps!

Modified from Bette Latta (http://faculty.southwest.tn.edu/jfriedlander/sample_5-paragraph_theme.htm)

Sample Five-Paragraph Examples Essay (on failure preceding success)

“Failure is simply the opportunity to begin again, this time more intelligently,” wrote Henry Ford. People are constantly shaped and influenced by their experiences. People learn by doing. Often, people learn considerably more from their mistakes than their success. For proof of failure driving success, consider examples from both science and art, including Thomas Edison, Vincent Van Gogh, and Stephen King.

The famed inventor, Thomas Edison, rose to prominence in the late 19th century because of his successes, but even he felt that these successes were the result of many failures. He did not succeed in his work on one of his most famous inventions, the lightbulb, on his first try nor even on his hundred and first try. In fact, it took him more than 1,000 attempts to make the first incandescent bulb but, along the way, he learned quite a lot. As he said, “I did not fail a thousand times but instead succeeded in finding a thousand ways it would not work.” Thus, Edison demonstrated both in thought and action how instructive mistakes can be.

The road to contemporary success for the 19th century artist Vincent van Gogh was even more dramatically paved with failure. In current day, van Gogh is considered one of the most celebrated painters of all time. However, during his lifetime, he was considered a disappointment. In current day, his paintings can sell for millions of dollars, but he struggled to sell his paintings when he was alive. He even took to burning several of his paintings because they would not sell.

The 20th century writer Stephen King, author of novels that were turned into popular movies (e.g., *Stand by Me* and *The Shawshank Redemption*) also experienced failure. When he wrote his first novel, *Carrie*, he was teaching school in rural Maine. Although he had previously had limited success in selling his short stories, it took him 30 attempts to get *Carrie* published. He almost threw away the manuscript, but his wife pulled it out from the trash and encouraged him to try again. It is hard to imagine Stephen King ever felt that defeated, isn't it?

Thomas Edison, Vincent van Gogh, and Stephen King demonstrate, in both science and art, that failure more often than not precedes success. Whenever we learn a new skill - be it riding a bike, driving a car, or cooking a cake - we learn from our mistakes. Few, if any of us, are ready to go from training wheels to a marathon in a single day but these early experiences (these so-called mistakes) can help us improve our performance over time. You cannot make a cake without breaking a few eggs and, likewise, we learn by doing and doing inevitably means making mistakes. If we treat failure not as a misstep but as a learning experience the possibilities for self-improvement are limitless.

Modified from **Essay Writing Tips** (https://www.internationalstudent.com/essay_writing/essay_tips/) and **Develop Good Habits** (<https://www.developgoodhabits.com/successful-people-failed>)

Sample Five-Paragraph Examples Essay (on examples of med student language)

“Mrs. Jones is your basic L.O.L. in N.A.D., admitted for a soft rule-out M.I.,” the intern announces. I scribble that on my patient list. In other words, Mrs. Jones is a Little Old Lady in No Apparent Distress who is in the hospital to make sure she hasn’t had a heart attack (to rule out a Myocardial Infarction). And we think it’s unlikely that she has had a heart attack (a soft rule-out). If I learned nothing else during my first three months of working in the hospital as a medical student, I learned endless abbreviations, new grammatical conventions, and baseball metaphors.

I started out in a state of primeval innocence, in which I didn’t even know that “s C.P., S.O.B., N/V” meant “without chest pain, shortness of breath, or nausea and vomiting.” By the end, I took the abbreviations for granted. I would complain to my mother, the English Professor, saying things such as “can you believe I had to put down three NG tubes last night?” And she’d respond, “You’ll have to tell me what an NG tube is if you want me to sympathize properly.” NG, mother, nasogastric - isn’t it obvious?

I picked up not only the abbreviations but also grammatical conventions. For example, you never say that a patient’s blood pressure fell or that his cardiac enzymes rose. Instead, the patient is always the subject of the verb: “He dropped his pressure.” “He bumped his enzymes.” This sort of grammatical construction probably reflects the profound irritation of the intern when the nurses come in the middle of the night to say that Mr. Dickinson has disturbingly low blood pressure. “Oh, he’s gonna hurt me bad tonight,” the intern may say, inevitably angry at Mr. Dickinson for dropping his pressure and creating a problem.

“Well, we’ve already had one hit today, and we’re up next, but at least we’ve got mostly stable players on our team.” This means that our team (our group of doctors and medical students) has already gotten one new admission today, but it is our turn again, so we’ll get whoever is next admitted in emergency and at least most of the patients we already have are fairly stable. A no-hitter is a night without any new admissions. Baseball metaphors are pervasive, but it is interesting to consider what it means to be winning. When the intern hangs up the phone and announces, “I got a hit,” that is not cause for congratulations. The team is not scoring points; rather, it is getting hit, being bombarded with new patients.

This special language – abbreviations, grammatical conventions, and baseball metaphors – contributes to a sense of closeness and professional spirit among people who are under a great deal of stress. As a medical student, it was exciting for me to discover that I’d finally cracked the code, that I could understand what doctors said and wrote and could use the same formulations myself. Some people seem to become enamored of the jargon for its own sake, perhaps because they are so deeply thrilled with the idea of medicine, with the idea of themselves as doctors. But there is the jargon that you don’t ever want to hear yourself using. You know that your training is changing you, but there are certain changes you think would be going a little too far.

Modified from Perri Klass’s (1984) *New York Times* essay titled “HERS” (<https://www.nytimes.com/1984/10/04/garden/hers.html>)

Sample Five-Paragraph Examples Essay (on media fear mongering)

John Stossel wrote two compelling articles, “Worry About the Right Things” and “The Media Likes Scaring Us,” about how American media focuses on feed our fear. It is not surprising that the news hand-picks stories that are rare but extreme. The news today is focused on entertaining to keep the public’s short attention to achieve their desired amount of views. Often these stories “hype” up a fear that is statistically improbable but has had a few occurrences. We see examples of media fear mongering in the coverage of bird flu, plane crashes, and video games leading to violence.

An example of the media “hype” that Stossel wrote about is how after some school shootings, the media often focuses on how the shooter played violent video games. After one shooting incident, my own family took away some “violent” video games from my brothers and me. My parents thought the news was trying to prove there is a correlation between violent video games and crime. But studies show there is an insufficient amount of evidence to make that connection. Stossel explained in his article that people don’t think abstractly about probability, and fears about violent video games is a prime example of that.

In one of his articles, Stossel also talked about people’s unjustified fear of the bird flu. I was surprised that not a single person in America died of the bird flu, while the common flu killed tens of thousands. Yet, the media was covering bird flu for months. The media depicted the bird flu could kill you at any second. Even though the regular flu is the more likely imminent threat, and my fear can be connected on how the media depicts the flu vs the less likely event of the bird flu.

Stossel also brings up the topic of plane crashes vs driving a car and how the media “hypes” people’s fear of flying, when driving is even more dangerous. I am a victim of being afraid to fly because of the media. It seems like every time I have to take a plane trip to go visit my grandparents in Florida the news shows a horror story on how an engine explodes mid-flight or a bomb threat was made. To this day, whenever the plane takes off or hits some turbulence I grab onto the sides of my chair and hold on. However, more people die every year when riding in a car than riding in a plane, and I’m not scared of riding in a car.

I was not very surprised by Stossel’s articles about how the media likes to expose us to fear. The media like to write about improbable but exciting stories. Things such as bird flu, plane crashes, and video games causing violence illustrate the media’s love of fear mongering. Moving forward, I hope to think critically and objectively about the information the media gives me. I want to live in less fear.

Modified from Susan M. Inez (<https://www.kibin.com/essay-writing-blog/2-illustration-essay-examples>)